

The World's Most Dangerous Weapon

Introduction.

- I. Today I would like to speak on the most dangerous weapon known to man.
 - A. Contrary to popular opinion, the most dangerous weapon in the world is not the atomic bomb. It is not some laser beam aimed at us from outer space. Indeed it is not even a weapon made by man.
 - B. The most dangerous weapon has been in existence since the creation of mankind. It has been known to start wars, ruin friendships, and ruin reputations. It has been known to wreck homes, split churches, and cause countless people to become discouraged and quit.
- II. Most of us know what this deadly weapon is. It is the powerful and destructive tongue that lives in a pool of saliva behind an ivory case of teeth.
 - A. Once there was a **lady who was the most notorious gossip in the church**. One Sunday she came down the aisle and took the minister by the hand and said, "I am really burdened...the Lord has convicted me of my gossip and I want to change." The minister said, "Well, what you intend to do about it." She said, "I want to lay my tongue on the altar." The minister was a little harsh and said, "Honey, I don't think we've got an altar big enough."
 - B. Yes, the tongue can do great harm, and there may not be an altar big enough to lay it on.
- III. Today I would like for us to study the tongue "**The World's Most Dangerous Weapon**."
 - A. The tongue is small, but it packs a great wallop and brings great destruction.
 - B. James wrote. (Jas. 3:1-13).

1 Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment.

2 For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to

bridle the whole body as well. 3 Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they may obey us, we

direct their entire body as well. 4 Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong

winds, are still directed by a very small rudder, wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. 5 So also the

tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by

such a small fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as

that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. 7 For every

species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. **8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. 11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Neither can salt water produce fresh.**

I. Importance Of Keeping The Tongue - Let us begin this lesson by considering the importance of keeping the tongue.

A. The tongue determines our eternal destiny. (Matt. 12:36, 37).

1. Consider what Jesus said. He said our words are so important that they will either justify or condemn us.
2. If we use ugly, dirty, filthy, angry, spiteful, gossiping, grumbling and murmuring words, we are going to be held accountable for them. We will be condemn unless we seek to control our tongues and seek God's forgiveness when we mess up.
3. On the other hand, if we use, kind, gracious, loving, edifying, and profitable words, then in the end these words will testify for us and justify us in the day of judgment. "He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin" (Proverbs 13:3).
4. May we all guard our tongues, so that we will obtain eternal life.

B. The tongue exposes what kind of people we are.

MAT 12:34 "You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. 35 "The good man out of his good treasure brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth what is evil.

1. Jesus says that our words expose our heart...it tells what kind of person we are.
 - a. Our words expose one of three things about us. We either have the heart of a viper (v. 34); a heart of an evil man (v. 35); a heart of a good man (v. 35).
 - b. You see, our words expose our true nature...what lies beneath the surface...what is deep down within our heart...our motives, desires, and ambitions. Our words expose our true character: whether good or bad, kind or cruel.
2. Listen to what James tells us in (James 1:26).
 - a. It doesn't matter if you are a Sunday school teacher, a deacon, an elder, or a preacher. If you do not have control over your tongue...James says that your religion is worthless.
 - b. If we want to be considered a good people, Christian role models, spiritually mature follower's of

Christ, then we must have control over our tongues.

II. **Dangerous Aspects Of The Tongue** - Let us now examine the dangerous aspects of the tongue.

A. The **tongue destroys**. (Jas. 3:5)

1. The tongue is a torch. It is like a spark in a forest of dead trees.
2. On October 8, 1871 in a barn in Chicago, **a cow by the name of Mrs. O'Leary** accidentally kicked over a lantern. That lantern fell into some hay, the hay caught on fire and from that the fire spread...and when the fire was over, over 100,000 people were left homeless...17,500 buildings were destroyed...300 people died...and it cost the city over 400 million dollars...Just because of one spark.
3. So often, one inappropriate word can cause a lot of damage. I wonder how many friendships have been ruined...how many fellowships have been destroyed...by the careless arsonist called gossip.
4. We must realize that one careless word can create everlasting damage. The tongue destroys and devastates ourselves and others.

B. The **tongue defiles**. (Jas. 3:6).

1. Jesus said in Matthew 15:11. We learn here that the tongue will defile us.
2. Our words can ruin our appearance and personality. Have you even been around people who smoke a lot. They smell like smoke. The inside of their cars and the inside of their homes smell like smoke.
3. Well, in the same way, our words can defile us. Our careless words can leave us with a smell, with a repulsive odor.
4. I remember meeting young women who I thought were pretty until I would hear them say a profane word or utter some curse word and in just that instance their beauty was gone.
5. The tongue can do the same thing to us. It can strip radiance and beauty of Christ away from our lives.

C. The **tongue devours**. (Jas. 3:7, 8).

1. Here, James compares the tongue to a wild untamed beast in the jungle that attacks and feeds off other animals.
2. You see, if we do not tame the tongue, it will devour us and those around us.
3. We have a term for devouring one another called "backbiting." That's a good term...for that is exactly what it is.
 - a. It is when you take your teeth and bite into the back of another person.
 - b. That's exactly the way one wild animal often attacks another wild animal by biting the animal in the back.
4. The tongue is like a piranha...which can eat you alive.

5. I heard about a **woman who went to the doctor for an examination**. She felt terrible. The doctor got a very serious expression on his face and said, "Madam, I hate to tell you this, but you have rabies." She got out her notebook and started making a list. He said, "What are you doing...making out your will." She said, "No, I'm making out a list of people I'm going to bite."
6. If we turn our tongues loose, they will devour...devour our friends, and our family. The tongue can be a very dangerous weapon. We must control it.

III. **Divine Purpose Of The Tongue** - Let us now explore the divine purpose of the tongue. (Jas. 3:9-12).

9 With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God;

10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.

11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water?

12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Neither can salt water produce fresh.

A. James in says that the tongue can accomplish spiritually that nothing else can accomplish physically.

1. It is physically impossible for a fountain to send out both fresh and bitter water. It is physically impossible for a fig tree to produce olives or a vine to produce figs or for salt water to produce fresh water.
2. Yet, He says so often the tongue does just that. It is used to bless God and to curse men. It is used for glory and it is used for gossip. It is used to bless and it is used to hurt. It is used to help and it is used to hurt. It is used to praise and it is used to pollute.
3. This certainly inconsistent. Those who are created in the image of God and who are His spiritual children those made in His image

B. The tongue is used for **glorification**. (Jas. 3:9).

1. Our tongues are to be used to bless God. Our words ought to be bathed in prayer. They ought to be soaked in praise.
2. If our words always bless God, there is no way that we could curse men.
3. How different our lives would be if we used our tongues to bless God. How different the church would be if every tongue in our church was used solely for the purpose of blessing God. How different would our fellowship be...
4. Let's use every possible opportunity to shower God with praises. (Heb. 13:15).

C. The tongue is used for **edification**.

1. Our tongues are to be used to build up, not tear down.
2. When we encourage someone, it change their life.

3. In Acts 13 a young man named John Mark was an enthusiastic worker for the Lord. In fact, he loved God so much that he accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. However, along the way, John Mark decided to return home and leave the missionary effort. Later in (Acts 15:36-39), Barnabas wanted to invite John Mark to join them for another journey, but Paul did not want to. As a result, the partners went separate ways, Barnabas with Mark and Paul with Silas. Read (Acts 15:36-40).
5. Can you imagine how devastating it was for Mark when Paul refused to let him go on the next missionary journey? He could have been so discouraged that he quit the ministry or even gave up on God.
6. However, Barnabas (Son of Encouragement) stood beside his friend John Mark despite his past failure and encouraged him in the work of the Lord. He lifted John Mark up and gave him another chance and inspired him to continue in the ministry.
7. Barnabas' encouragement changed John Mark's life. Think about it, what would have happened if Mark had quit? We probably wouldn't have the Gospel according to Mark. Our tongues are to be used to bless God and edify one another.

Conclusion.

- I. I hope and pray that this lesson has given you some insight on the nature of the tongue and will motivate us to be careful with the way we use it.
 - A. Once I read about **a woman who had a very serious throat condition**. The doctor told her that her vocal cords needed total rest. She was forbidden to talk for 6 months. With a husband and 6 kids, this seemed impossible, but she did what she was told. When she needed the kids she blew a whistle. Whenever she needed to communicate she wrote things on pads of paper. After 6 months, her voice came back. When asked what it was like to communicate only in writing, she said this, "You'd be surprised how many notes I crumpled up and threw into the trash before I gave them to anyone. Seeing my words before anyone heard them had an effect that I don't think I can ever forget!
 - B. It would perhaps be good for all of us to see our words or at least think seriously about them before we speak.
 - C. It would certainly be good to have this prayer on our lips each day. (Psa. 19:14).
- II. May all of us use our tongues to the glory of God and to confess our faith in Christ. If you are here and have never confessed your faith in Christ, we invite you to do so today. Come confessing your faith and be baptized into Christ. Come as we stand and sing.

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